

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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SUBJ: ECEVIT'S VISIT TO WEST GERMANY

SUMMARY: REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) CHAIRMAN BULENT ECEVIT'S MARCH 11-16 VISIT TO WEST GERMANY (LIKE HIS JANUARY TRIP TO CYPRUS) HAS RECEIVED WIDESPREAD ATTENTION HERE, IN LARGE PART BECAUSE OF ITS SIGNIFICANCE FOR DOMESTIC POLITICS. JUSTICE PARTY (JP) SPOKESMAN HAS SHARPLY CRITICIZED THE TRIP. END SUMMARY

1. ECEVIT, WHO CUT SHORT THE SIX DAY VISIT AND RETURNED TO TURKEY MARCH 16 FOR CONSULTATIONS ON THE FORMATION OF A NEW GOVERNMENT TOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE IN ANKARA MARCH 18 THAT IT WAS UNFORTUNATE TURKEY HAD SO FAR BEEN UNABLE TO OVERCOME THE GOVERNMENT CRISIS AT A TIME WHEN THERE WERE VARIOUS OPPORTUNITIES IN THE FIELD OF
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FOREIGN POLICY. ECEVIT SAID THAT DURING HIS VISIT TO GERMANY

HE HAD MET WITH GOVERNMENT AND PARTY OFFICIALS, THE PRESS, AND LABOR UNION LEADERS IN AN EFFORT TO REMEDY A LONG-STANDING FAILURE BY TURKS TO GO BEYOND OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT CONTACTS. DURING THOSE TALKS, ECEVIT CONTINUED, HE HAD PROPOSED TRIPARTITE ECONOMIC COOPERATION WHEREBY THE TECHNOLOGY OF THE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES AND THE FINANCIAL CAPITAL OF MIDDLE EASTERN STATES WOULD BE BROUGHT TOGETHER IN TURKEY "WHERE THERE ARE SPECIAL CONDITIONS FOR THIS COOPERATION." ECEVIT ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT THE RPP AND THE GERMAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (SPD) HAD SET UP A JOINT COMMITTEE TO INCREASE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND TO STUDY THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS FACING THEM, PARTICULARLY THE TROUBLES OF TURKISH WORKERS IN GERMANY (WHICH ECEVIT HIMSELF DISCUSSED WITH GERMAN OFFICIALS DURING HIS VISIT).

2. EDITORIAL COMMENTS TO DATE HAVE REFLECTED FAVORABLY ON THE VISIT:

A. ORHAN DURU (MILLIYET MARCH 19) COMMENTED THAT ECEVIT RECEIVED TREATMENT IN GERMANY SIMILAR TO THAT ACCORDED TO A PRIME MINISTER, WITH HEAVY SECURITY MEASURES AND WIDE COVERAGE IN THE GERMAN PRESS. DURU SUMMARIZED THE RESULTS OF THE VISIT AS FOLLOWS: (1) GERMAN AGREEMENT TO RESUME MILITARY AID TO TURKEY AS SOON AS "TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES" COULD BE SOLVED; (2) AGREEMENT BY GERMAN LABOR UNION LEADERS TO ATTEMPT TO INCREASE ALLOWANCES FOR CHILDREN PAID TO TURKISH WORKERS; (3) WIDESPREAD INTEREST IN ECEVIT'S PROPOSAL FOR TRIPARTITE ECONOMIC COOPERATION; (4) ELIMINATION OF THE SPD'S "INDIFFERENT" ATTITUDE TOWARD TURKEY AS RESULT OF THE CYPRUS ISSUE; AND (5) ESTABLISHMENT OF THE JOINT SPD-RPP COMMITTEE.

B. MARCH 17 GUNAYDIN SAID THAT THE VISIT WAS IMPORTANT IN HAVING GERMAN MILITARY AID TO TURKEY RESUMED, THAT THE INTERVIEWS WITH ECEVIT HAD EXPLAINED TURKISH POLICY ON CYPRUS IN A "CORRECT AND FIRM" MANNER, AND THAT ECEVIT HAD PRESENTED THE RPP TO THE WORLD AS A CANDIDATE TO COME TO POWER ALONE OR IN A COALITION.

3. HOWEVER, JP VICE-CHAIRMAN SELAHATTIN KILIC, IN A WRITTEN STATEMENT GIVEN TO THE PRESS MARCH 19, CRITICIZED THE TREATMENT GIVEN ECEVIT'S VISIT TO TURKISH RADIO AND TELEVISION (TRT) AND SAID: "ECEVIT WAS NEITHER THE GUEST OF THE WEST GERMAN GOVERNMENT, NOR WAS HE AUTHORIZED TO ENGAGE IN NEGOTIATIONS AS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE EMPOWERED REPRESENTATIVE OF THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT TURKEY AND WEST GERMANY ARE FRIENDS AND ALLIES. TO TRY TO MAKE IT AN RPP-SPD RELATIONSHIP IS BELITTling THIS FRIENDSHIP AND HARMS THE RELATIONS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES.."

4. COMMENT: ECEVIT'S VISIT TO GERMANY AS THE GUEST OF WILLY BRANDT AND THE SPD, TOGETHER WITH HIS TRIP TO BRITAIN BEGINNING MARCH 20 (SEPTel), SERVES TO REINFORCE ECEVIT'S

IMAGE AS AN IMPORTANT FIGURE ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE (AN IMPORTANCE FIRST WON DURING THE CYPRUS CRISIS LAST SUMMER). FURTHERMORE, IT UNDERSCORES THE RPP'S CONCERN WITH THE PLIGHT OF TURKISH WORKERS ABROAD. THE SHARP REACTION BY KILIC SUGGESTS THAT ECEVIT'S POLITICAL RIVALS SUSPECT THAT THIS VISIT (LIKE ECEVIT'S TRIP TO CYPRUS IN JANUARY) WAS INTENDED TO PLAY AT LEAST AS IMPORTANT ROLE IN DOMESTIC POLITICS AS IN ENHANCING TURKISH-GERMAN RELATIONS.
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